

Alma Record.

C. F. BROWN, Editor and Publisher

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FRIDAY, JAN. 4, 1901

The United States closed the century with a wonderful record for foreign trade. Our imports for the year 1900 footed up about \$825,000,000, while our exports reached the enormous total of \$1,470,000,000. These figures, which are estimated only as to December, point to a balance of trade of \$645,000,000 in our favor, which is about \$25,000,000 ahead of last year's record breaking showing. The century's showing is one to be proud of. In 1800 our total imports were but \$20,000,000 and in the space of 100 years they have increased 1,315 per cent. In the same period our exports have increased 3,601 per cent, and it was not until after 1812 that we began manufacturing on our own account. Our imports, too, have increased enormously, but we buy less abroad per capita than we did at the beginning of the century. Up to the last decade of the century our exports were largely of raw materials, cotton, breadstuffs, meats and most products and petroleum. But now our industries have reached a stage of progress at which we can enter the markets of the world and compete successfully with European manufacturers. If nothing occurs to hinder our commercial development, the close of the twentieth century, or even before that time, will see us supreme in the commerce of the world.

There ought to be no hesitancy on the part of congress in carrying out the recommendation of the postmaster general to correct the fraudulent abuse in the classification of mail matter. If that class of publications, mostly of a purely advertising nature, that now by an evasion of the purpose of the law pay only second-class rate of one cent per pound were made to pay eight cents a pound under the third class, where they rightly belong, the government would be the gainer by a sum estimated at more than \$12,000,000 a year. This sum would give the great majority of the farmers in the United States who can reasonably be reached by rural free delivery, the benefit of the service. Any policy, any invention, any change in habit or custom that brings the people of a country nearer together and makes them better acquainted by facilitating the exchange of thought and greeting makes the nation better and stronger.

Democratic presidential candidates in different parts of the country will do well to keep their eyes on David B. Hill. That he and his friends are now laying their plans to capture the nomination in 1904 is as certain as any fact can well be. That Bryanism can survive until then, or that the Lincoln statesman will have any voice in the future of the democracy, the Hill men do not for a moment believe. When Mr. Bryan begins to count subscribers to his new paper he will not find many of the Hill following among them.

The twentieth century was ushered in last Tuesday and while the beginning or ending of a century makes no material difference in the manner in which we live, yet we seem to look forward with expectations of great changes. Each century that has passed has marked the progress of the world and with the start the century has to commence with, great things not dreamed of by man at the present time, may be accomplished before its end. Here's to the new century.

Recognizing the fact that Michigan never had a better railroad commissioner than the Hon. Chas. S. Osborn, Governor-elect Bliss announces his reappointment to that responsible position, and his action in making Mr. Osborn his own successor meets with universal approval. This appointment means that the good work accomplished by Mr. Osborn in the past, especially with regard to grade crossings, will be continued for another two years at least.

A general fumigation has taken place in Lansing this week. The moral atmosphere of the whole state is better for it.

CONSOLIDATED ROADS.

The promoters of the Crystal Lake electric railroad held a meeting with Mr. Mills and other directors of the Lansing, St. Johns and St. Louis Railroad in St. Johns Monday, and agreed upon terms putting both lines under one company. The promoters of the Crystal Lake branch take \$50,000 in the main company. Among the heavy stock holders here are, D. S. French, \$5,000; E. P. Waldron, \$5,000; Thomas Bromley, Jr., \$5,000; Willis McLouth, of Detroit, \$5,000; F. A. Travis and Isaac Hewitt, \$5,000. Others here and in Hubbardston and Carson City and along the line take the balance. \$43,000 of the \$50,000 had been subscribed Monday. Work on the line between here and Lansing was discontinued for the winter last week. It is expected the road will be completed and cars running to St. Johns by July 1st.—Clinton Republican.

CHINESE JUSTICE.

The Prisoner Must First Confess Before He Can Be Punished by Law.

"June 27, at ten o'clock," says the late Admiral John W. Philip in the interesting passages from his diary published in Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly, "I went down with 30 men to attend a meeting of the Chinese court. The business to-day consisted in comparing the English and Chinese records of the case and making them agree. They reexamined the two leaders, who are the Chung brothers, and occupied nearly the whole day in trying by different tortures to make these fellows confess to their guilt. One proceeding rather amused me, although it was barbarous. The leading mandarin had asked one of these brothers several questions, to which he would not answer to the satisfaction of the court, so the mandarin wrote out the evidence as he thought the criminal ought to speak it, and then told him to acknowledge that it was correct; and when the poor fellow refused to comply with the court's request, he was tortured until he fainted in the courtroom and had to be removed. By the Chinese laws they cannot punish a person until he confesses to everything. If the court thinks the prisoner is telling lies they torture him for the truth; or, if he does not speak as they wish him to and will not confess his guilt, they torture him in the most cruel manner until he does as they wish. As soon as he confesses, he is beheaded, frequently in one hour. I was told in court that very often a criminal would die under his tortures rather than confess himself guilty. These, I suppose, are rare cases, where the man is really innocent of the crime charged. I have seen enough of Chinese jurisprudence to disgust me with it for the future."

CHINESE ANTIPATHIES.

They Are Based Upon Some Ancient and Very Powerful Causes.

It should be remembered that the antipathy of Chinese to foreigners from the west has several very ancient and very powerful causes, says ex-Minister Angell in Atlantic.

Profound differences of belief and of temperament separate the Asiatics generally by a wide chasm from the Europeans. The golden age of the former, all their ideals belong to the remote past. Those of the latter belong to the future. Their economic ideas are far apart. Inventions, machinery, division of labor, belong to the Europeans, and are repelled by the Asiatics. Their religions touching the deepest springs of life are discordant. The western man regards his civilization as so far superior to that of the eastern man that he looks down with a certain contempt on him, a contempt which is cherished to the full by the Tam for "infidel dogs," by Brahmins for the conquerors of India, by the Chinese for "foreign devils."

But the Chinese have special grievances; the opening of ports and the imposition of obnoxious treaties on them by force, the construction of railways and telegraphs, and the working of mines in such a way as to disturb the graves of ancestors, and to interfere with the feng, shui and thus to bring disaster on the people, and the presence of the unwelcome foreigner not only in the ports, but throughout the interior in the person of the missionary.

A SOUL TRAGEDY.

Starvation Drives an Honest Man to the Questionable Calling of Fortune-Telling.

There are tragedies of soul and body in fortune-telling. The story of one of the craft, writes Harvey Sutherland, in Alaska's, is something like this: What precedes his arrival in New York you need not be concerned with except that it shows a capable, a learned and brave man. But New York is a hard city to get a footing in. Sickened cannot two pupils in bookkeeping, the only ones he could get, should have paid each his fee of \$25. They didn't. The man and his wife came down to making needles at 80 cents a gross. One week he reached the high-water mark of \$8.50. They paid five dollars a week for a room and lived on a dollar or so. One day they overheard a man laugh: "I have to live on beer for a month to make up for this extravagance." The wife plucked her husband's arm and whispered: "Live! Strike me that's pretty luxurious." The husbandly said one day: "Mrs. Sutherland, you don't go out often enough for your meals." They had been scolding leaves of bread and such things into their room. After that they went out and shivered in the parks with nothing to eat, but staying out long enough to have gone to the restaurant. He knew something of palmistry, and read up more. A school keeper that he knew advanced him the money to furnish up a soothsayer's flat, and now fortune smiles on the rogue that frowned on the man trying to be honest.

Multiplying Oyster Shells.

One thousand bushels of shucked oysters leave about 1,100 bushels of shells, which accumulate in great heaps about the shucking houses. The oyster shells landed on the shores of Maryland during the last 90 years have been reckoned at 12,000,000 tons—a quantity twice sufficient to overload and sink every sailing vessel, steam vessel, barge and canal boat in America.

Profits of a Convict Mine.

The Tennessee convict coal mine is a paying institution. The profits in the last six months will amount to more than \$100,000.

Modest Marriage Fee.

A Jersey City justice was recently paid a marriage fee of ten cents.

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F. E. Pollasky, Alma, Mich

NOTICE.

We, the undersigned ice dealers of Alma, wish to state to our patrons that during the ensuing year ice will be furnished to private families by the 100 pounds as follows: Ice washed off and placed in refrigerators at 25 cents per hundred pounds; left at the door or well curb at 40 cents per 100 pounds. A liberal discount will be made to hotels, restaurants and public places. The cause for this departure is the growing disposition on the part of some parties to demand more ice for the money, when furnished by the week or month, than we can afford to supply, and if patrons buy by the 100 pounds they will get what they pay for and we will get pay for what we sell.

E. N. CHADWICK,
F. A. LEONARD.

Sugar Beet Reports.

Secretary Bird is sending out the first copies of his annual report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1900. The report is interesting, principally on account of the space devoted to sugar beets and to several bulletins on subjects of great importance. Twenty-nine pages are devoted to sugar beets, as follows: "Sugar Beet Investigation," a bulletin by Prof. J. D. Towar; "The Beet Sugar Industry in Michigan," a paper by Prof. C. D. Smith; "Domestic Supply of Sugar for Michigan," a paper by Dr. R. C. Kedzie; "Sugar Beet Leaf Miner," by Prof. R. H. Pettit.

Term Opening of Alma College.

After two weeks' vacation, nearly the entire student body had returned on Thursday morning, and in response to the chapel bell gathered at the usual place of morning worship. After the chapel exercises, Prof. J. T. Ewing delivered a most instructive and entertaining lecture on "Student Life in Ancient Athens." The students are always glad to listen to our popular professor of Greek, and this was no exception. In his discussion he covered two periods in the life of Athens, from 350 to 400, B. C., and from 200 to 400, A. D., and he gave a vivid picture of life of the students and the trials of the professors of the former period.

Several new students entered Thursday. Only one old one did not return. Thus the work of the new year and the new century is most propitiously begun.

Literary Notes.

Human interest is the keynote of Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly. Its stories and its articles follow as closely as may be the lines of genuine human experience. Its editors do not reject romance; indeed, they seize upon a good story whenever they find it, but they try to give the magazine as a whole the flavor of reality. The reader feels instinctively that most of the stories are transcripts from life; not the commonplace existence too familiar to most of us, but the life of energy and experience. Take for example the January number. It opens with a singularly dramatic article, "The Reign of Soapy Smith," the notorious boss of Skaguay. The article is descriptive of occurrences incredible almost, yet actual, written by a man who took a prominent part in the long fight against Smith and his ring. The story is more than the extraordinary history of a bad man. It perfectly illustrates the development of city bossism, reduced to its simplest terms in the primitive civilization of a mushroom town.

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Too Busy

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